The Lions' Pride

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Student Earns Prestigious Scholarship Award

By Nicholas Santos
Managing Editor

On Jan. 21, Cassidy Whitaker, sophomore, was one of about six students chosen by the Tampa Bay Business and Professional Women's Association to be awarded a $500 scholarship.

Whitaker is a Political Science major and also has a minor in journalism. She is also a Contributing Writer and Political Columnist on The Lions' Pride Newspaper. As Whitaker is one of Saint Leo University's own students, The Lion's Pride is proud to congratulate her on winning this prestigious scholarship award.

"I really couldn't believe they chose me, but I was really grateful. I was so honored that such a prestigious organization chose me as one of the recipients for their scholarship. I also love being able to represent Saint Leo University. Most of the women that received scholarships were all from USF and HTC," said Whitaker.

Wishing to make her dream of being a political journalist/analyst a reality, Whitaker regularly pursues scholarships through Saint Leo University's scholarship resource pages. She believes that her studies, in combination with her position at The Lions' Pride Newspaper, will help with this goal.

"It's great to be able to do what I want to do in the future in college. It's really great practice and a really great experience," said Whitaker. "I would absolutely love to go on a campaign trail with a candidate, follow them, and cover them."

Since the 2008 election, Whitaker had a major interest in politics and reporting on them. She was drawn into the world of politics and elections by her mother, who was very knowledgeable on the subject. The two of them followed the election together, with Whitaker showing more interest in the election as time progressed. Eventually, when then-candidate Barak Obama visited the Tampa Bay area for a rally, Whitaker and her mother attended to see him in person. The real-life appearance of Obama, and the ensuing result of the 2008 election, inspired and fascinated Whitaker.

"I was really young, so [at the time] I didn't fully grasp how cool it [politics] was. But then he got elected, and I was like 'Wow, I had only seen him just a short time ago,'" said Whitaker.

This interest would eventually become a passion that would guide Whitaker on her journey to success through perseverance. The Tampa Bay Business and Professional Women's Association scholarship was a large step in this journey.

According to Whitaker, this particular scholarship was extremely competitive. The application process required a lengthy application and an activity resume to be completed. Multiple letters of recommendation were required as well.

Once she was chosen as a finalist, Whitaker had to travel to the Tampa Club in downtown Tampa Bay, where the award ceremony was held. This event, known as a "Networking Night," allowed for both students and business representatives in the Tampa Bay area to make career connections. Everyone had a chance to introduce themselves over dinner.

It was during the dinner that each of the six finalists had to perform a speech addressing why they would need the scholarship money. Whitaker made the final speech of the event.

"[The speech] was terrifying. I thought that the speeches were the main event of the night, but it was actually right off the bat; I hadn't even finished my salad and I had to go up there and make my speech," said Whitaker.

Whitaker, in her speech, expressed why exactly she is determined in pursuing scholarships. Seven years ago this February, Whitaker's mother had suffered injuries from a fall that rendered her completely disabled. Not long after that, her father was laid off from his job, leaving her parents without a steady source of income and their in-college daughter with less of a means to pay for school.

"It was a mental and emotional strain on our family. I've tried to get as much of my tuition covered by scholarship money as I can because I want to relieve them of that burden. I don't want them to have to pay for my school anymore."

In the future, Whitaker would like to attend graduate school and pursue a career in the political field.

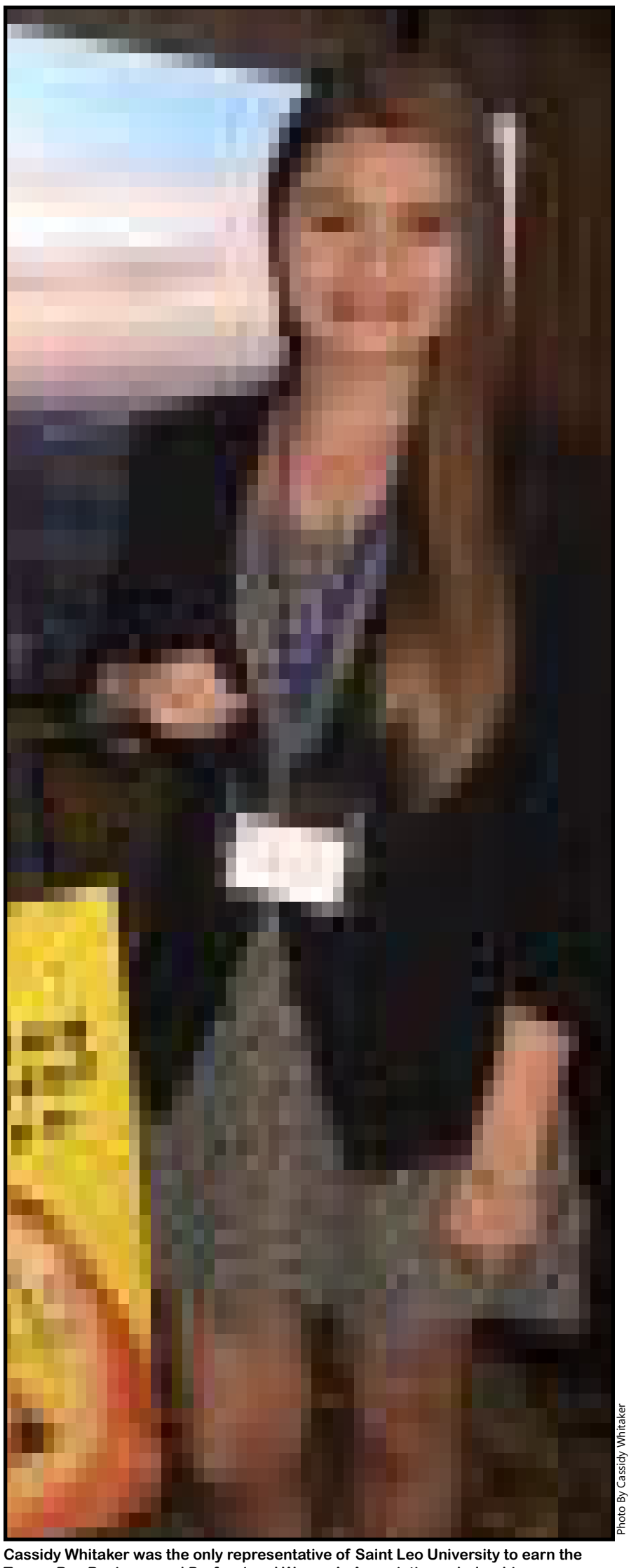

Photo By Cassidy Whitaker

Cassidy Whitaker was the only representative of Saint Leo University to earn the Tampa Bay Business and Professional Women's Association scholarship.

Editorial

How Deceitful are Politicians?

By Allison Cobb
Contributing Writer

In the world of politics, how important is honesty?

Runs for a spot in political office are crucial. They get heated, intense, and often times integrity is thrown to the wayside. No one is perfect, and no one tells the truth all the time. But when someone is speaking to a body of people in hopes of governing them, the lies that they are telling suddenly become ultimately more important. The way a politician speaks can determine their whole career. They are representatives of the general populace, and knowing what to say, and more importantly what not to say, is vital to a good politician.

Citizens have to know who the politicians are, and most importantly, if they like them. Too often citizens are so set in their views and opinions that at the first sight of something different than themselves, they spew hatred. In politics there is no slack.

Going down the list of conversation items best to stay away from around the Christmas evening dinner table, politics might be the one that forever reigns at the top. While it's a rather broad topic, opinions widely differ on each issue under the blanket term "politics". This is wonderful, and everyone is entitled to their opinion. What happens is that the politicians running for some kind of office often get the votes of citizens who agree with them on any which issue.

What determines a good politician? It's a hard question to answer. The ability to objectively judge what makes a good politician versus a bad politician seems to have been lost, buried beneath the mess of divided parties and harsh side taking. In the world of politics there is a ton of grey area, and yet a lot of times it is looked at in only black and white.

Are good politicians determined by their ability to govern or their compassion? Is it the skills they possess or the moral qualities they value? Does the ability to be a good leader lie in honesty or not?

When the candidates involved in the current presidential run are looked to for examples of such dishonesty, they're picked apart by both journalists and citizens. The current presidential candidates are constantly criticized for their white lies, truth stretching, or, according to monologist and author Mike Daisey, storytelling.

"The lines between storytelling, personal mythology and lying aren't bright or clear ones, and that's because if it were true that all storytelling is lying, every single one of us is a liar" said Daisey in an article for The Guardian.

The issue of lying in politics can easily be turned into a form favoritism. People are likely to say that the candidate they support does not lie and any whom they do not support does.

The overlying problem though is that if someone tells lies, are they a good politician? It's not an objective question, everyone lies. It turns the question into how fit anyone is to govern a group of people, especially when no one can be completely and always truthful.

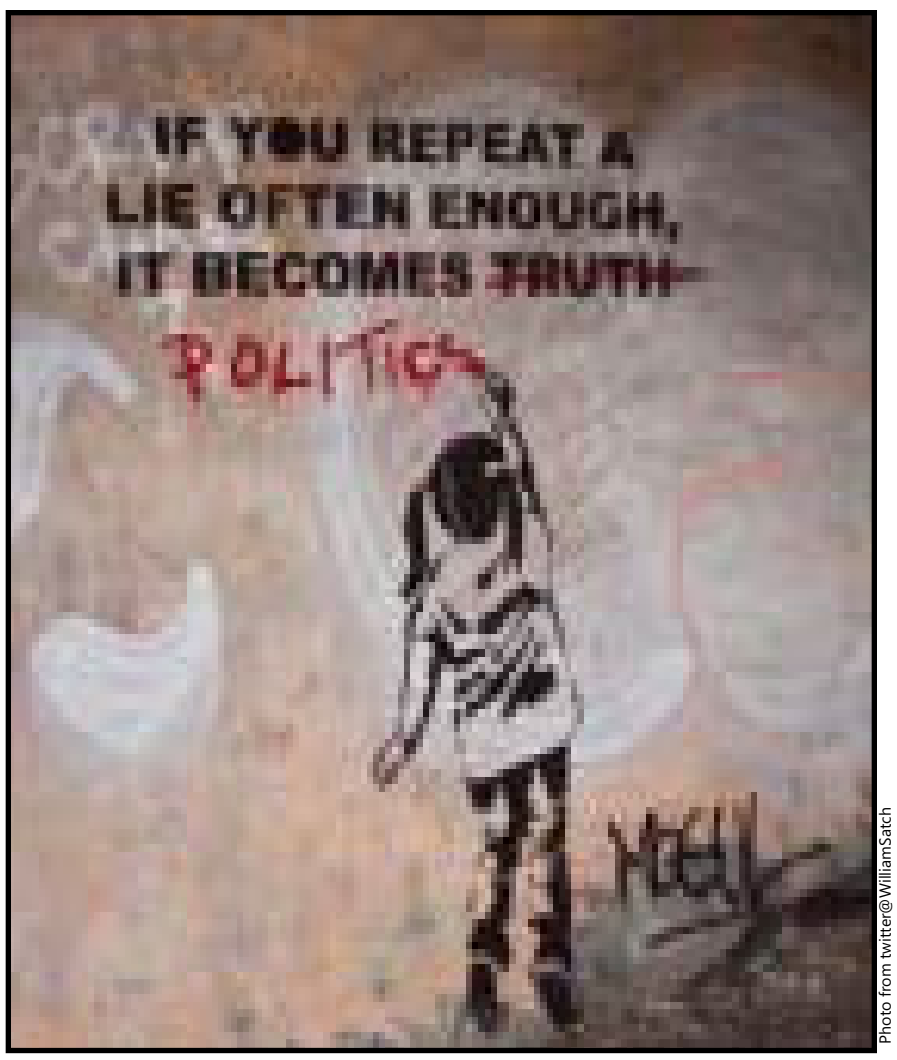

Photo from twitter@WilliamSatch

Many people consider dishonesty one of the basic characteristics of any political campaign.

Check us out online at www.pride-online.net

"The Hateful 8" Review

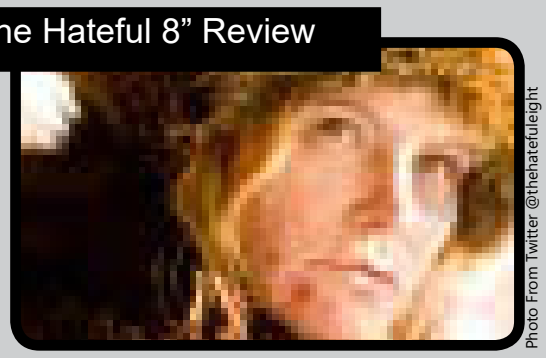

Photo From Twitter @thehatefuleight

Quentin Tarantino's lastest film is full of his signature dialogue and spectacular cinematography. Set in the Wild West just after the Civil War, it is a gory snapshot of life during the Reconstruction Era.

Homemade Vitamin Water

Picture From Twitter @_HoneyGood

Need some help staying healthy after making some New Year's resolutions? These are some refreshing recipies for homeade vitamin water. These drinks use chopped up fruit instead of corn syrup and taste delicious.

Capturing Rainwater

Photo From Wikimedia Commons

In order to create more eco-friendly homes, rainwater can be used for certain household tasks. It is a great substitute to using hose water to water plants and fresh water to flush a toilet. However, it should not be consumed by humnas unless it has been decontaminated.

Newsroom

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Letters To The Editor

- 500 word maxium
- No profane or slanderous language
- Students: Include name and year
- Faculty: Include name and rank
- Please include a phone number to verify authorship
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- Send submissions to **thelionspridenewspaper@gmail.com**

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Campus News

Saint Leo Helping with Cost of Textbooks

By Corina Rimiller
Contributing Writer

Every college student can vouch for the costliness of textbooks, but do they have to be so expensive? Saint Leo University says "No." Saint Leo has shown numerous times how much it cares about its students and have added another to the list. To give students a hand, Saint Leo has found a way to shave off a little of the cost of college courses by joining the Price Match program.

In fall of 2015, the Follett Higher Education Group started the Price Match program to get textbooks to students for less. This spring semester of 2016, Saint Leo University Campus Bookstore, alongside other stores, is participating.

The way the program works is if a student finds a price from an online book seller website that is lower than the Campus Bookstore price, the student can either print a screen shot or show an image via an electronic device that shows the ISBN to verify the book and price.

The only requirements for the selected online book seller are 1) that the website must allow the potential buyer to buy and ship the book from the site, 2) the book must not be from a peer-to-peer market place, and 3) it cannot be a digital book. Common major online book sellers include Amazon, Barns & Nobles, and Chegg. Some sites that are not accepted are Gold Box, Publisher Direct, and Digital Book.

Once the book is purchased from the Campus Bookstore at the bookstore price, the difference between the Campus Bookstore and lower, online site price will be given to the student via a gift card.

"For example," says Maureen Tarpey, Saint Leo University Bookstore manager, "a customer purchases a new book from us, but finds it less expensive on another approved site in new condition, we'll match the price by giving the customer the difference on a gift card. This also applies for [used books and rentals]."

"But," one may say, "I have already bought my textbook on campus and found it on Amazon for less! Is it too late?" Answer? Maybe not! The Campus Bookstore allows customers to come back within seven days of the purchase (it is mandatory to have the receipt) with proof of the price difference to receive a gift card. The gift card can be used in the Saint Leo University Campus Bookstore as well as on the store website (www.saintleoshop.com). Campus Bookstore gift cards have no expiration date.

Photo By Corina Rimiller

Shania Bienaime (left) and Marci Mena (right) are students as well as employees promoting the Price Match Program.

Spring 2016 is the first time Saint Leo has participated in a program like Price Match and plans to continue the program should it be successful. Not too long ago, the Campus Bookstore started their rental program and book buyback program; both have been effective, and rentals have given students the opportunity to save up to 80 percent on textbook costs.

So far, the Price Match program has been successful and Tarpey believes the program to be very helpful to students on saving money.

"[Price Match] is a program that requires some effort on behalf of the customer," States Tarpey, "And I hope those that have participated so far have found it to be worthwhile because of that."

Saint Leo University Involvement Fair

By Niclas Bez
Contributing Writer

On Jan. 22 the Saint Leo Involvement Fair took place in front of the Student Activities Building. The fair always takes place within the first few weeks of each semester and it is a great opportunity for new students to meet the clubs and organizations. Although the weather was unpleasant with heavy rain, many people came out to talk to the 35 clubs and organizations that took part in the fair.

The clubs and organizations include multicultural, religious, academic, and special interest organizations. Greek life was presented with almost all sororities and fraternities taking part in the fair.

Antonella Aviles from Alpha Sigma Tau said, "The involvement fair is a good event to promote our organization and what we do as a chapter."

Students had the opportunity to learn about the clubs and organizations and were invited to participate in the recruitment week.

Among the participating clubs were two very new clubs that used the event to promote their organization and motivate people to get involved. One of them is the Global Studies Club that launched last fall semester. Grace Lederer, a junior and global studies major says that it is a great club to get involved in. Part of their club activities include writing letters in the name of Amnesty International to global leaders and dictators with the goal to free journalists or stop executions.

Photo By Niclas Bez

The Global Studies Club fights for human rights and free journalism.

Another new club on campus is the Disc Golf Association that just started this semester. Zachary Smit, who is the president is excited that they just finished the 9-hole disc golf course on campus. The club is looking for more people to join and will be happy to teach more people how to play the game. For more information, you can go on twitter @SLUdiscgolf.

For people that are interested in charity, there was a stand from the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. The goal was to raise money for the hospital that is completely free for children. Furthermore, they want to promote their fundraising Up 'til Dawn that will take place on March 5. For more information, you can visit www.Stjude.org/utd.

The assistant director of student activities, Tara Centeno, says that the involvement fair is a great event for people to get involved in the clubs at Saint Leo University. This event is designed to enhance each individuals Saint Leo experience and make friendships that can last a lifetime. The people that missed the involvement fair have the opportunity to find out more about the clubs and organizations on the Saint Leo homepage.

Science

Feeling Extremely Anxious, Reader?

By Craig Graves
Worldly Education Editor

There are many things in the world that are scary to many people, like spiders or death. There are many things in the word that make many people anxious, like public speaking or crowded places. For some individuals, these things, and others, are terrifying enough to be called phobias.

All phobias are fears, but not all fears are phobias. Likewise, anxiety can result from experiencing a fear or a phobia, but not all situations in which a person may feel anxious is linked to a fearful stimulus. No matter the cause of the fear or anxiety, it is natural for someone to experience either fear or anxiety at some point in their lives.

"Anxiety is a normal part of human functioning and helps us avoid situations that threaten our well-being," said Dr. Kevin Keiffer, a professor of Pychology at Saint Leo University and a licensed psychologist. "A fear is an unpleasant emotional reaction to a situation or person that is perceived as danger or a threat to our personal well-being. A phobia can be defined as an irrational or extreme form of a fear that affects an individual's ability to function in their personal, social or occupational environment and which is recognized by the individual as extreme or irrational."

Whenever a person is exposed to a stimulus they are fearful of, they may experience an increased heart rate, breathing rate, and blood pressure. These responses are indicative of the "fight or flight" response, which is the momentary pause before an individual decides whether to run away from the stimulus or attack it.

"In these anxiety provoking situations, hormones like cortisol are released which increase circulation, reflexes, and cognitive flexibility," said Keiffer. "Thus, anxiety is a part of the human condition necessary for survival, but when these emotional reactions become excessive or irrational they are manifested as fears and phobias."

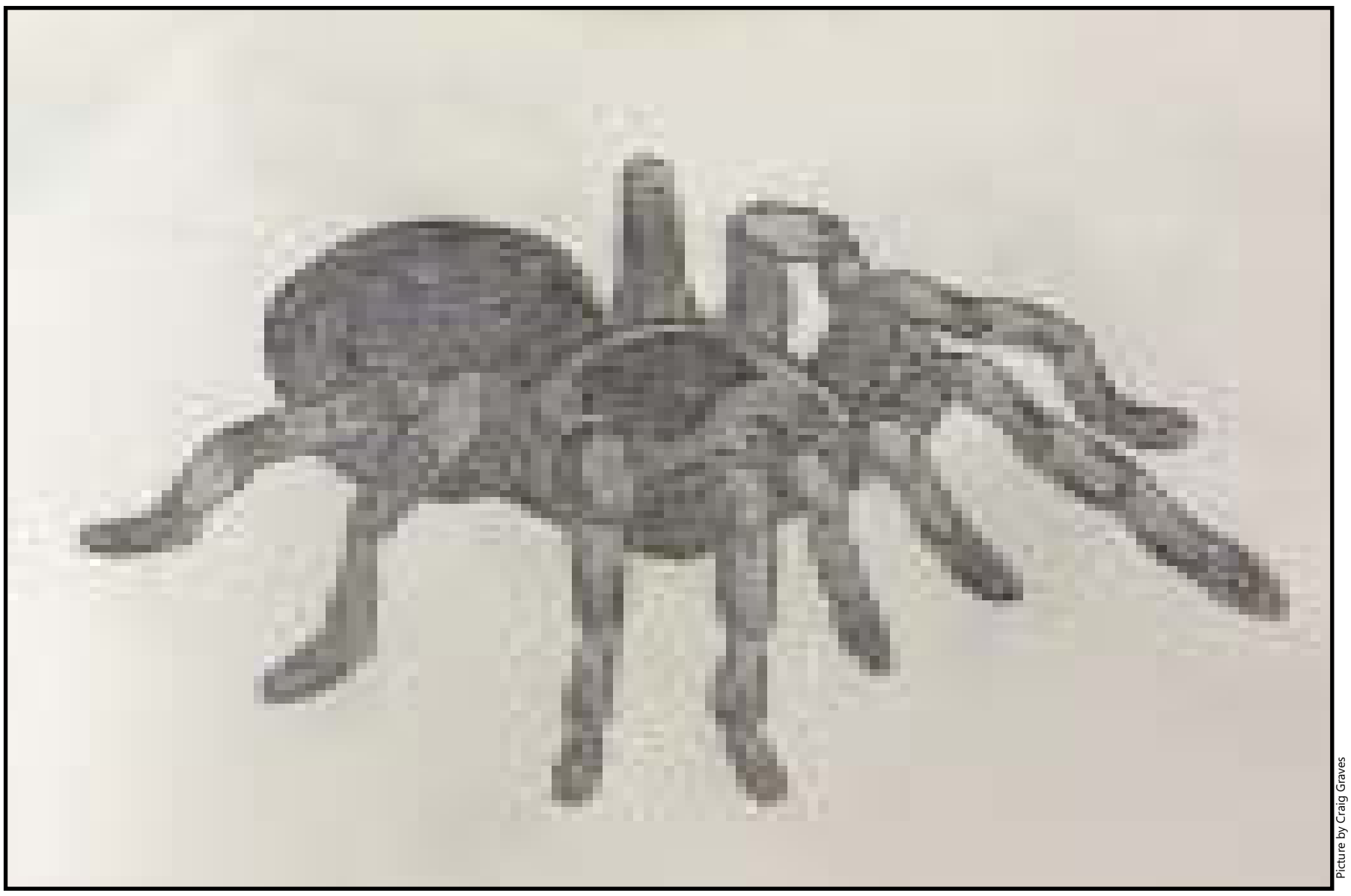
Phobias are considered debilitating because of the severity of the anxiety attacks individuals can suffer. Many studies dating back to the 1930s have evidence that the amygdala and the hippocampus, located in the temporal lobe of the brain, are responsible for or related to anxiety disorders including the processing of fear and phobias.

In 2010, a case study was published by a group of researchers at the University of Iowa. In this study, the researchers followed a woman, referred to as "SM," who has a rare genetic disease called Urbach-Wiethe disease, which decreases the operational functionality of her amygdala. During this almost twenty years long study, SM was exposed to various situations that many people would have been afraid of, including handling live snakes and spiders, touring the reportedly haunted Waverly Hills Sanatorium, and a marathon of horror movies the researchers had considered "emotionally evocative." In each of these situations, SM did not show fear. Despite that, she is still able to function properly and is able to show and feel other emotions. The results of this case study was that the amygdala played a large role in the experience of fear and fear responses.

Since few people have the same genetic disorder as SM from the previously mentioned case study, many people probably do experience phobias. Of those individuals, many may not know that they can receive treatment for their phobias.

"Anxiety is a learned response and as such can be unlearned," said Keiffer. "Treatments for anxiety disorders include cognitive behavioral therapy, which may include exploring and altering the irrational thoughts about the anxiety provoking stimulus or other behavioral techniques like systematic desensitization, psychopharmacological intervention, mediation [and] relaxation strategies, yoga, acupuncture, and alternative or herbal remedies like kava, passionflower and others. A licensed mental health counselor or licensed clinical or counseling psychologist can work therapeutically with individuals suffering from anxiety, but if psychopharmacological intervention is desired, a physician or psychiatrist must prescribe those medications."

A recent study conducted by Drs. Marieke Soeter and Merel Kindt of the University of Amsterdam showed that some medications can be used to diminish the fear responses of some individuals. In the study, people with arachnophobia, the fear of spiders, were exposed to a tarantula. Then, while these people were experiencing the effects of their fear, they were injected with either propranolol, which is used to treat high blood pressure, or a placebo. According to the findings of that study, those injected with



Picture by Craig Graves

By many accounts, arachnophobia, the fear of spiders, is the most common phobia in the world. This is most likely due to how deadly they can be, their eight legs, and their eight eyes.

Science

the propranolol displayed a high chance of approaching the tarantula rather than avoiding it over a one year span.

The goal of that study was to show how people can overcome their fears over time through the use of an amnesic drug. These findings could also be used to help relieve some symptoms of other anxiety disorders and post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD. In some ways, PTSD is like a phobia in that there is usually some definitive events that causes the anxiety to flare up. This is not to say that PTSD and phobias are exactly the same, as the nature of a phobia is to be irrationally based in various instances while PTSD is based more in the function of a person's memory.

Given that phobias are called irrational, some people may find the subject of certain fears to be ridiculous. For example, hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia is the fear of long words and is, itself, a long word. While a long word may not seem too terrifying to some and therefore irrational, the phobia still exists for others. In contrast to that phobia seeming too irrational, thanatophobia, the fear of death, is a fear that many people across cultures have experienced. It is important to note that no matter how outrageous a phobia seems, it is called a phobia because someone, or possibly many people, has experienced it before.

Picture by Craig Graves

Many people probably developed clourophobia, the fear of clowns, after reading Steven King's "It."

What are You Afraid of?

Acrophobia: the fear of heights

Trypophobia: the fear of holes

Ophidiophobia: the fear of snakes

Cynophobia: the fear of dogs

Ergophobia: the fear of work

Cibophobia: the fear of food

Tokophobia: the fear of pregnancy

Vehophobia: the fear of driving

Ailurophobia: the fear of cats

Hemophobia: the fear of blood

Globophobia: the fear of balloons

Monophobia: the fear of being alone

Bananaphobia: the fear of bananas

Sidonglobophobia: the fear of cotton balls

Androphobia: the fear of men

Gynophobia: the fear of women

Emetophobia: the fear of vomiting

Podophobia: the fear of feet

Autophobia: the fear of abandonment

Musophobia: the fear of mice

Telephonophobia: the fear of talking on the phone

Koumpounophobia: the fear of buttons

Galeophobia: the fear of sharks

Iatrophobia: the fear of doctors

Pediophobia: the fear of dolls

Gamophobia: the fear of commitment

Gerascophobia: the fear of getting old

Glossophobia: the fear of public speaking

Arts & Entertainment

Top Games of 2015

By Jonah Robertson
Editor-In-Chief

Traditional RPG: "The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt"

"The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt" was everything people look for in a roleplaying game. The writing was fantastic, the player's choices influenced the world around them, and the world felt like a living, breathing thing, instead of a hollow frame. While the player was unable to customize their character's appearance, they were still given enough choice in dialogue to allow them to make the character their own. Geralt of Rivia, the player character, evolves throughout the game in however way the player wants him to. Much like the other two entries in the "Witcher" series, this game holds up a standard that other RPGs should try to reach.

Action RPG: "Bloodborne"

"Bloodborne" is a difficult game to explain to those who are unfamiliar with FromSoftware's "Souls" series. The game features exceptionally difficult, fast-paced combat, and is incredibly rewarding when enough time is devoted to it. The high difficulty tends to turn off more casual players, but for those who stuck with it, the game was a marvelous experience. The combat was fun, the enemies felt intelligent, and the bosses were terrifying, yet gratifying to finally defeat. The plethora of weapons allowed the player to figure out exactly how they wanted to play the game, and each was equally viable. While the game is absolutely not for everybody, for those gamers who love a challenge, there's nothing better.

First Person Shooter: "Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Siege"

Tom Clancy's "Rainbow Six" series has always been a satisfying military shooter, but the most recent entry, "Rainbow Six: Siege," has moved the series in a fantastic direction. While the previous games were focused on squad-based combat and tactical choices on a broad scale, this one is much more specialized in its gameplay. The players form two teams, one holding hostages, and the other attempting to save them, and they must combat each other in a small home or building with endless means of entry and exit, including windows, destructible walls, and other strategic points of entry. The combat is tense and quick, death is permanent, and with good cooperation, it will be the best multiplayer shooting experience and gamer has ever had.

Third Person Shooter: "Splatoon"

"Splatoon" was an unexpected treasure among Nintendo's extensive game catalogue. The game is a Third Person Shooter, but a rather nontraditional one, where the goal is not to kill opponents, but rather coat as much of the map as possible in colorful ink. The game was fast-paced and goofy, lighthearted fun. While not a game for dedicated shooter fans, many found that "Splatoon" was a perfect mix between casual gameplay and potential strategy.

Sports Game: "Rocket League"

"Rocket League" is a fantastic game, but difficult to classify. The game involves players driving cars and attempting to hit a massive soccer ball into the opposing team's goal. It's effectively a boiled-down version of soccer with cars instead of people, and while it sounds completely ridiculous, the gameplay is immensely fun. It's fast, it's intense, and the competitive nature of the game makes it a blast to play with friends. "Rocket League" was by far the best original sports game to come out in a long time, and should be played by fans of sports games and non-sports games alike.

Photo From Twitter @PlayStationEU

The gothic visuals in Bloodborne are striking and grim, setting the tone for the brutally difficult nature of the game.

Platformer: "Super Mario Maker"

While not technically a platformer, but rather a means by which gamers can create their own Mario levels, "Super Mario Maker" gave the gaming community a chance to show their ingenuity in level design. Some of the levels are awful, some are great, and some are simply ludicrously difficult, but the fact that anyone can make a Mario level made this game a wonderful experience. While truly artistic levels are often few and far between, they are absolutely worth searching for, because some are far beyond the creativity of the original game developers themselves.

Horror Game: "Soma"

Made by the developers of horror classic "Amnesia: The Dark Descent," "Soma" was a truly terrifying experience in which players had to investigate an intriguing world filled with advanced technology and horrific monsters. Much like "Amnesia", this game features exploration and storytelling as much as it does horror, and the atmosphere keeps the player tense, just waiting for the next scare. In a genre that has recently been diluted by games that are nothing more than cheap jump-scares, "Soma" manages to deliver a horror game similar to the classics, one built more around atmosphere and tension than surprise.

Simulation Game: "Cities: Skylines"

"Cities: Skylines" is the most recent entry in the "Cities" series of games, and unlike some other city development simulators that came out in the past couple

Florida State Fair Concert Events

LAZY BONEZ 2/6 @ 3PM

10TH AVENUE NORTH 2/8 @ 7PM

COUNTRY GOLD TOUR 2/9 @ 2PM

Leroy Van Dyke, Jimmy Fortune, T. Graham Brown, Bill Anderson

COUNTRY GOLD TOUR 2/10 @ 2PM

Leroy Van Dyke, Rex Allen Jr., T.G. Sheppard, John Conlee

BEATLEMANIA LIVE 2/10 @ 7PM

GARY PUCKETT & THE UNION GAP 2/12 @ 7PM

ROBERT CRAY BAND 2/13 @ 7PM

COLT FORD 2/15 @ 6PM

ARANDA 2/15 @ 7PM

Photo From Twitter @Polygon

Other games have allowed players to build their own levels to share, but none have done it as well as Super Mario Maker.

Arts & Entertainment

years, "Skylines" is everything a game of this sort needs to be. Players are able to build massive, sprawling cityscapes with thriving infrastructures and beautiful civic planning, or to design ludicrous urban locations which in no way could exist in reality. The point of the game is to let the player's inner civil engineer run wild, and it does so exceptionally well.

Strategy Game: "Galactic Civilizations 3"

The "Galactic Civilizations" series has been around since 2003, and each iteration has been a more in-depth strategy game than the last. The third game has taken every element from the previous two and merged them into a cohesive strategy game that takes a long time to master, but provides the player with endless possible ways to run their own personal galactic empire. Whether the player wants to win through war, economics, or diplomacy, the universe is their oyster.

Fighting Game: "Mortal Kombat X"

"Mortal Kombat X" is just like every other "Mortal Kombat" game, but better and more streamlined. The fighting is smooth and rewards precise play, but if people want to pick the game up and play for fun with friends, they still can. "Mortal Kombat X" fills a specific niche in the fighting game genre where it allows intense competitive play, but also can be enjoyed equally from a more casual standpoint. Especially because of the recent lull in good fighting games, "Mortal Kombat X" is without contest the best of 2015.

Indie Game: "Lovers in a Dangerous Spacetime"

In the past few years indie games has become increasingly popular, to the point that it is difficult to pick a best game each year because of how many wonderfully crafted games in the genre are released. The easiest way to judge them is by how legitimately fun they are, and in that regard "Lovers in a Dangerous Spacetime" is a strong frontrunner. The game involves players working together to operate a tiny spaceship, wherein they cannot control all systems at the same time. Therefore, the players must run between the guns, and engines, and shields, and try desperately to maneuver their ship through space while fighting off aliens. The game is just pure, unadulterated fun, and should be played by anyone with a friend with whom they can share the experience.

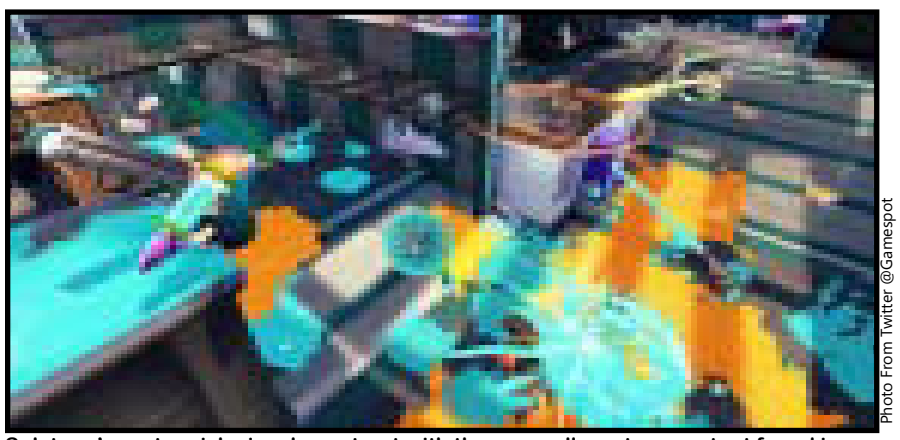


Photo From Twitter @Gamespot

Splatoon's cartoonish visuals contrast with the generally mature content found in shooters.

Current Events

December 19 - February 1 - Artwork From the Permanent Collection on the Holocaust @ The Florida Holocaust Museum

January 30 - Little Big Town with Chris Stapleton Tickets from $33.00

February 6 - 7 - Farm Fest & Quilt Show @ The Pioneer Florida Museum and Village

February 6 - Thomas Promise and Support the Troops Golf Tournament @ Silverado Golf & Country Club

February 8 - Saint Leo Town Commission

February 11 - Andrea Bocelli @ Amalie Arena Tickets from $17.00

February 13 - World Radio Day

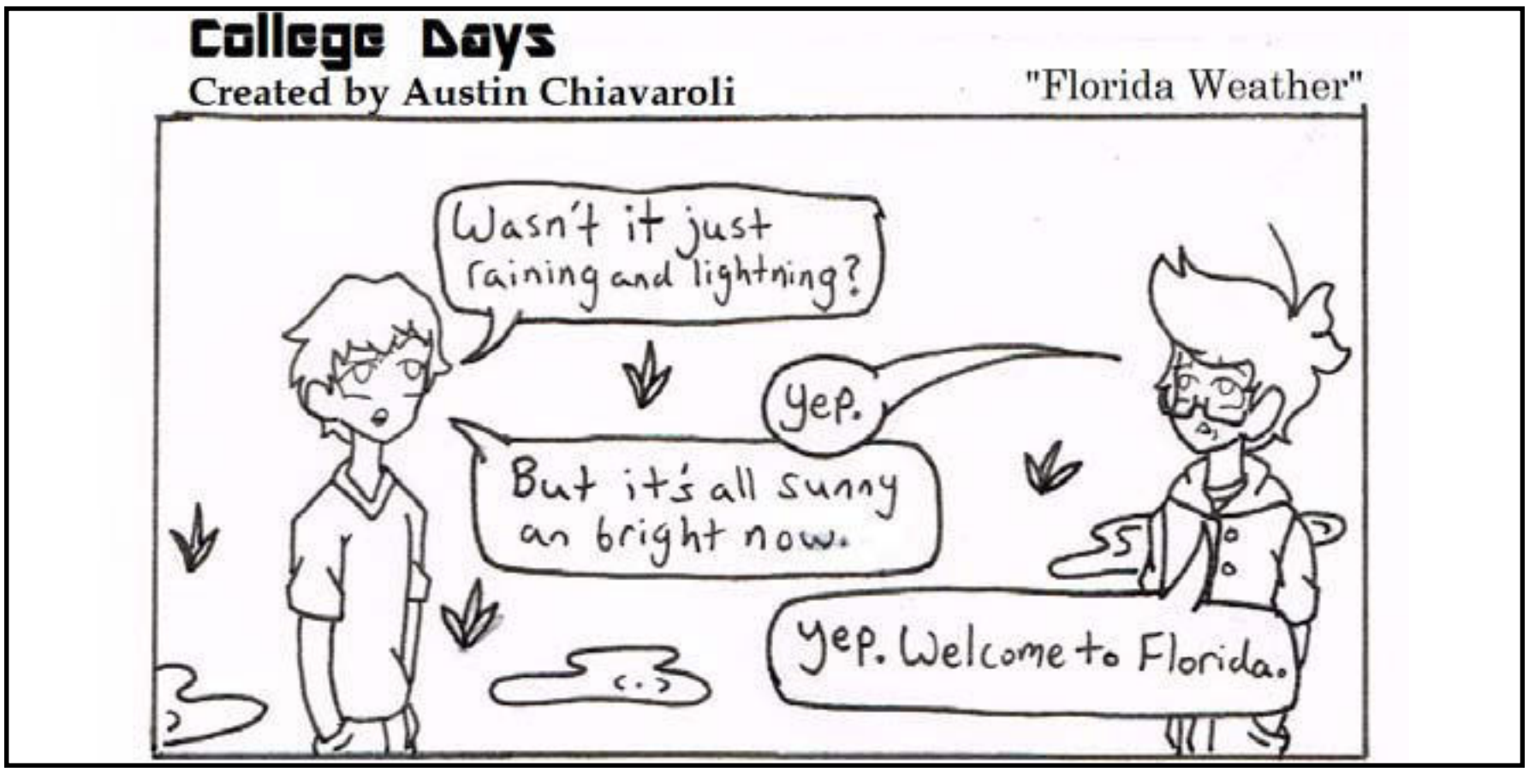
February 14 - Valentine's Day

February 20 - Arenacross @ Amalie Area Tickets from $20.00

February 24 - Jeff Dunham @ Amalie Area Tickets from $43.00

February 27 - Disney Live! Mickey and Minnie's Doorway to Magic @ Amalie Arena Tickets from $34.00

April 29 - 98RockFest @ Amalie Arena - Tickets from $29.00



Sports

A Look Ahead: Previewing the 2016 Baseball Season

By Matthew Vandenburgh
Sports Editor

Winning 36 games in a season is impressive, but The Saint Leo Lion's baseball team will look to improve upon a year in which they were very talented on offense, but lacked the pitching to pull it through.

With an overall Earned Run Average of 4.14, and an in conference ERA of 5.77, pitching has been one of the big focuses of Head Coach Sean O'Connor.

"We better improve there, or it's going to be a long season. We did not pitch well, at all, last year. We pitched well early on, did not pitch well in the conference," said Coach O'Connor. "We did not pitch well in big games."

Even though the team did perform exceptionally on offense, batting .326 overall and bashing out 58 home runs, the offense alone cannot carry a team.

"We tried to hit our way into winning and that usually doesn't work," said Coach O'Connor.

This year it will be even harder, as it is unlikely the team can repeat its power output from last season.

"We're a little bit of a different team offensively than we were," said Coach O'Connor. "We're a little bit quicker, I think we're gonna be a little bit more offensively where we can run a little more. I think we'll hit our share of home runs, I think we have power to be able to do that but I don't think that going into the season I would say we're going to be a home run hitting team."

The team will look to changing their style to compensate from the anticipated drop in power numbers. Talking about what differences in particular, Coach O'Connor emphasized his player's base running abilities will help carry the day.

"If we hit more doubles, we'll be a much better team than if we hit 58 home runs," said Coach O'Connor. "We were strong, we had power. We were slow as molasses, we didn't have a lot of speed. I think this year we have a little less power, but we have a lot of speed."

All of these improvements will be needed in a loaded Sunshine State Conference. Not only does the conference hold the defending national champions, the University of Tampa Spartans, but six of the last ten national champions have come out of the Sunshine State Conference.

"There's no doubt that this is the best conference in the United States in Division 2 baseball," said Coach O'Connor.

It will be a tough road ahead, with preseason polls predicting the Lions to finish tied for 5th in the conference, which would match last season's results.

There is hope, though. With the conference being as tough as it is, the schedule will be great preparation for any potential post season challenges.

"We don't worry about Tampa, we worry about everybody. Every team in this conference is good," said Coach O'Connor. "If you can get to the regionals, you can win the National Championship, that's really what it is. The hard part is getting out of this conference."

The problem is, despite very good records the last three seasons, the Lions haven't gotten out of the conference.

"We've won 104 games in 3 years and haven't played in a postseason game," said Coach O'Connor.

Coach O'Connor expects success though, and credits the University with allowing that success to flourish.

"With the things that we're given here at Saint Leo, I mean, this is pretty nice. We got a pretty nice facility, we're fully funded scholarship wise. We're given all the tools, Saint Leo gives everything we need," said Coach O'Connor.

Photo From Twitter @saintleobase

Coach O'Connor (center) is entering his fourth season as head coach of the baseball team.

Upcoming Games For the Week of 1/29/16 - 2/4/16

W Swimming
1/29: Vs Tampa 3:00pm

M Swimming
1/29: Vs Tampa 3:00pm

Baseball

1/29: Vs Montevallo 6:00pm
1/30: Vs Montevallo 1:00pm
1/31: Vs Montevallo 1:00pm

M Basketball

1/30: @ Fla. Southern Jenkins Field House 7:30pm

2/3: @ Barry 7:30pm

W Basketall

1/30: @ Fla. Southern Jenkins Field House 5:30pm

2/3: @ Barry 5:30pm

Upcoming Games For the Week of 2/5/16 - 2/11/16

Softball

Eckerd Tournament
2/5: Vs Chadron St. 4:30 pm
2/5: Vs Shorter 7 pm
2/6: Vs Palm Beach Atl. 1:30 pm
2/7: Vs Ursuline 9 am
2/7: Vs Florida Tech 11:30 am

Baseball

2/10: @ Hawai'i Pacific 11:00pm

M Tennis

2/6: Vs Georgia College 12 pm (@ Valdosta, Ga.)
2/7: @ Valdosta St. 12pm

W Tennis

2/6: Vs Georgia College 12 pm (@ Valdosta, Ga.)
2/7: @ Valdosta St. 12pm

M Golf
(@ Lakeland, Fla.)
2/8: Matlock Collegiate Classic
2/9: Matlock Collegiate Classic

W Tennis
@ St. Augustine, Fla.
2/7:Flagler World Golf Invitational
2/8: Flagler World Golf Invitational